

A General

# EPISTLE TO

The Univerſall Church  
of the firſt born, whole Names are  
written in HEAVEN.

Even to all the Saints, in the unity of  
the Spirit, *Grace and peace be  
multiplied.*

Tending to the information of the judg-  
ment, and the binding up of thoſe wounds,  
breaches, and diviſions amongſt Chri-  
ſtians, that ſo unity and peace  
might be preſerved.

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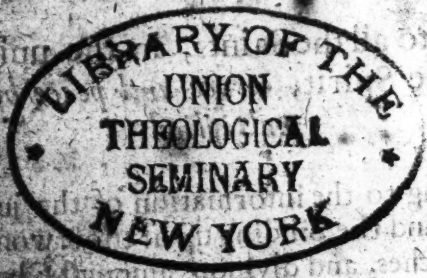
Written by *Thomas Collier*

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L O N D O N

Printed for *Giles Calvert*, and ſold by him  
at the Signe of the Black ſpread Eagle  
at the weſt end of Paſſy, in the Strand.

A General  
EPISTLE  
TO  
The Universal Christian  
officers and whole members  
written in 1744



Written by Thomas Collier

Printed for O. C. ...  
at the Sign of the Black ...  
at the West end of ...





# THE CONTENTS.

1. **T**He cause of divisions discovered.
2. What God is not.
3. What he is.
4. How he is in himselfe.
5. God in the Sonne.
6. God in the Saints.
7. Of Saints Communion with God, and each  
with other.
8. Truth, what it is.
9. Of the true knowledge of this GOD  
truth.
10. Of the Scripture.
11. Of the nature and glory of this knowledge  
of God in the Spirit.
12. Of Christians rule of obedience.
13. Of the Mystery of the crosse of Christ.

14. Of the Kingdome of heaven.
15. Of Perfection.
16. Of Hell.
17. Of particular Application.
18. Of the spirituall Sabbath.
19. Of the spirituall Baptisme.
20. Of the spirituall Supper.
21. Of the second coming of Christ.
22. Some grounds tending to unity laid  
downe.
23. Some doubts and queries answered.

The end of this book is to shew

How we may be  
God in the  
Of the  
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**GENERAL EPISTLE**  
T O  
**The Universall Church**  
**of the first born, whole**  
**Names are written in**  
**HEAVEN.**

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**CHAP. I.**

*The cause of division discovered.*



**I**Ts not the least but the greatest mercy to be made one in the Fathers love; and that soul who knowes love from its being gathered up in love, and posselt with love, can speak something of that love.

And deare Christians, Saints by calling, for to you I direct my speech, notwithstanding it hath beene the divine pleasure of the Father, not onely to manifest to, but to shed abroad his love in your hearts by the spirit: yet I observe what by my owne experience, and what I have seene in other Christians, much confusion in the knowledge of the things of God.

Having some experience of this *Babylon* within my self, I could not but declare unto you my apprehensions concerning it; and what I shal here write unto you, I question not, but that it may through the heavenly Spirit, end to satisfaction and peace, I shal minde you.

First, What I judge to be the cause of this confusion.

Secondly, What the remedy.

Thirdly, That the knowledge of this remedy, will give satisfaction to the soule, concerning the grounds of these many confusions.

First, What I judge to be the cause of so much divilion and confusion amongst Christians,

1. Its ignorance in the knowledge of the mystery of God; or rather, the mystery who is God; the truth is, that we have had wonder-

derfull low and fleshly apprehensions of  
God, forming up a God, like our selves, al-  
though we acknowledge God to be a Spirit,  
and that he wil have spiritual Worship: yet  
we have had exceeding grosse and fleshly ap-  
prehensions of him; and thus being igno-  
rant of the fountain, we have met with lit-  
tle lesse than confusion, if not death, many  
times in the streames. But I pass this first  
Particular with brevity, because I have  
occasion to mention it more at large here-  
after.

A second cause flows from creatures pres-  
sing so much after, and living so much in  
those streames, which occasions sometimes  
internal troubles, sometimes external dis-  
turbances, flowing from ignorance in the my-  
stery, which is God.

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## CHAP. II.

*What GOD is not.*

I shall therefore proceed to the discovery  
of the Remedy, or rather of my know-  
ledge in the mystery of him, who is in him-  
self glorious, the knowledge of whom will  
put an end both to confusion and division,  
in and amongst Christians; and because the

apprehensions of Christ hath been very low, and for the most part besides the truth; I shall therefore disclose my apprehensions concerning God iniqui

First, That he is, and not in this place mention: But only his; and to mention

Secondly, What he is, and how he is.

First, What he is in himself, and because of those many confused apprehensions in this particular, I shall first declare what he is not.

2. What he is.

1. What he is not: He is not, first, as some imagine, Three Persons, yet one God, or three substantings, distinguished though not divided; 'tis altogether impossible to distinguish God in this manner, and not divide him; thus to distinguish is to divide; for three persons are three not onely distinguished, but divided: Some say there is, God the Father, God the Son, and God the holy Ghost, yet not three, but one God: Let any one judge if here be not three Gods, if three then not one; its true the Scripture speaks, of Father, Son and Spirit, but it no where, as I know, mentions, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: its true the Scripture gives, and that truly, these three denominations to God, Father, Son, and Spirit: not that there are three

three persons or subsistings in God, this cannot be imagined without blasphemy against God; but rather distinct and several making knowne of one and the same subsisting unto the sons of men: I shal therefore discover my apprehensions in this particular, and I think that I have the Spirit of God.

First, That he is called the Father, as he is purely God, of himselfe and in himselfe the glory, rise and fountaine of all our good, and so of and from himselfe brings forth *glorious dispensations and manifestations of love* unto the sons of men: so that in a word, He is the Father, as he is the rise and fountaine of al good, as he drawes souls to himselfe, so making them partakers of himselfe.

Secondly, He is said to be the Son, either,

1. In relation to the worke of Creation, Redemption, and so of manifestation of his love unto the sons of men; or else

2. In relation of his taking man into union with himself, that so, in and through man he might commend love unto man; and thus is he said to be the Son, and the blood of Christ, is said to be, *The blood of God*, Act. 20. and so his body must be the body of God, that is, *The body that was taken into union with God*; by which means he bears the denomination of Son, so that he is the Son by his union with man.

Obj



*Ob.* Is not Christ the Son by eternal generations?

*Ans.* Its true, some say he is so, but I see no truth in it, nor any ground for faith to believe it; for generation is not from eternal; for in the work of generation or begetting, hee that generates or begets, is before him that is begotten, and so the Father is before the Son, if this be truth, and one God begets and brings forth another in his owne likeness; if this be truth, let the spiritual man judge. Its objected again,

That Christ must needs be God distinct from the Father, with relation to satisfaction; the Father was offended; Christ who is the Son must be God distinct from the Father, that so he might be able to satisfie the Fathers wrath; for none but God could satisfie God.

*A.* By this it seems that there are two Gods, one God offended, another God to satisfie; which is no lesse than a destruction to the divine being, if it were possible so to do: it is true, God satisfies God, but it is one and the same, not one offended, and another satisfying; but that one God satisfies himself, and so makes known his love to sinners.

Thirdly, God is called the Spirit, not only,  
1. In relation to his invisibility, and omnipresence in all places, which is only proper to a spirit. But

2. In

2. In relation to his operation in the Saints, and in the world, so he is the Spirit; For God is a Spirit, and the Lord is that Spirit: So that there are not three persons or subsistings, but one God under three discoveries; The Son is, The everlasting Father; the Father is in the Son, and so he is the Son; the Spirit is God, and so he is both the Father and the Son.

Obj. This is that the Scripture holds forth unto us, and therefore we ought to believe it, although we cannot apprehend it.

Ans. 1. The Scripture holds forth no other God but one.

2. Its true, the Scripture presents us with variety in unity, and unity in variety, yet but one subsisting; varieties of discoveries of one and the same God, but not of subsistings or beings of that one God: This one God variously subsists in the whole creation, by which he gives being unto all, but yet he is but one subsisting in this variety, this one God variously subsists, and operates in the spirits of Christians, yet he is but one subsisting in that variety.

Ob. Its said, That there are three that bear record in heaven, The Father, Word and Spirit.

A. Its true, yet not three subsistings, or persons, but one God made known under three denominations: Yet something I shall minde further from these words:

## A General Epistle

1. Its said, *There are three that beare record in Heaven, and three in Earth*: Those three in Earth, I understand to be the low and earthly condition of creatures in the first act of believing; for Believers, in the first manifestation of God unto them, are very low in their apprehensions of God, and are often said to be carnall and earthly; now Water, Bloud and Spirit bear witness in Earth, that is, to the spirits of Christians in their first believing; *Water*, that is, some power against sinne; *Bloud*, that is, the apprehension of the bloud of Christ; the *Spirit* operating, and so agreeing in these, seals up comfort to a soul in a low condition: But the *Three in heaven*, that is, in the high and glorious discovery and enjoyment of God; there the *Father, Word, and Spirit* bears witness, and these three are one; That is, the soul that dwels in Heaven, he sees that notwithstanding creatures have had such confused apprehensions of God.

And notwithstanding God hath made himselfe known under these three denominations, yet *Father, Word* and *Spirit* is all but one God; and this one God is the witness of *Love* to the Soule that dwels in Heaven, &c. So by this you may judge who are the blasphemers, those who say God is three Persons, or those who deny it, knowing him

him to be but one subsisting.

Secondly, As he is not three Persons or subsistings, so likewise he is not one substance or substance comprised in some particular place, as it is generally imagined, that God dwels in Heaven, that is, in a place above the Skie, there, he is essentially contained, and onely his power made knowne here below, not knowing that God is truly, really and essentially in all places, &c. But I passe to the second, *What God is.*

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### CHAP. III.

*What GOD is.*

**G**OD is one entire, invisable, glorious being, filling all places with his presence, both Heaven, Earth and Hell, not contained in any place, but is essentiall in every place; he is the Life, mystery and glory of all created beings; so that although he be not essentially any of those created beings, yet he is in all those, he is in and through all, the life and glory of all; not as some imagine limited to some place essentially, and that his power upholds al; but I know no distinction betweene the essence and power of God, the wisdom, mercy and power of God

is God, there is no division or distinction between God and his power; where the power is, there God is; God assumes no nominal attribute to himselfe, which is not himself, for there is no quality in God, but is God; So that these are but fleshly imaginations, to confine God into any locall place, and little differ from those who look upon God as an old man sitting in Heaven, bringing to passe his will on Earth; so others whom I judge not, but many of them may be precious, yet looke upon God as a Spirit or spirituall subsisting, sitting in Heaven; that is, in some locall place of Glory above the Firmament, manifesting his Mercie, Wisedome, Power, &c. here on Earth, not seeing God to be Mercie, Wisedome, Power, and al good Essentially, that it is his being, his nature, which truly and essentially is in all places, filling all places with his presence, though not to creatures apprehensions with his Glorious presence; yet he is in hell as well as in heaven, in darknesse as well as in Light, for he creates both, &c.

## CHAP. IV.

*How GOD is in himselfe.*

**T**HIS Invisible, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, glorious Spirit is in himselfe, and of himselfe, purely, perfectly, and unspeakably Glorious; as he was before all things, so he is without all things, *viz.* all Created excellencies adds not to his being, to his Glory, though he appears Glorious in these to his Saints, and so is indeed admired in the hearts of al who rightly know him, yet it addes nothing to his Glory essentially; neither doe or can this God enjoy any thing but himselfe in all the worke of Creation, nay, in the worke of Redemption, and Renovation too; there is nothing that he can enjoy, but himselfe, for there is nothing Spiritual but himselfe, nothing capable of the knowledge and enjoyment of himselfe, but himselfe, untill transformed into his own Glory by himselfe, and so made capable of being Spiritual, Eternal, and so of the enjoyment of himselfe, with, and in himselfe eternally.

Thus I apprehend God to be one entire, Glorious, Invisible Being, purely and completely



pleatly perfect in himselfe, without any addition by any created Excellency to his Glory; the whole Creation addes nothing to his Glory and perfection; but he is the perfection and Glory of the whole Creation, *even the new Creation*, though much more Spirituall and Glorious, yet addes nothing to his Glory, as to himselfe, but indeed makes him to shine with the more Lustre and Glory in the Spirits of his people, &c.

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CHAP. V.

*GOD in the SONNE.*

**N**Otwithstanding GOD is in himselfe such a pure, perfect and glorious being, yet he is pleased to make knowne Love to low, fleshly and carnall Creatures; And that he may effect his purpose in this particular

He formes out himselfe, as it were, in, or through divers and various fleshly formes or dispensations, according to the weak apprehensions of his Creatures; that so he may by himselfe in those formes, work up Soules about all those fleshly dispensations, to live with, and in himselfe, above, and without all these formes; So that,

First,



First, Although God be truly in, and of himselfe, yet he is in other things which are not himselfe; and not only in other things, for so he is in all, but in other things manifest, and made knowne Spiritually to the Saints, as he is in himselfe.

And First, He is in his Sonne, that is, in relation to the Union of the two Natures, he is in him as he is man: So by vertue of Union, God and man is become the Sonne, and so the Son is God blessed for ever.

But now I minde the Father, being in the Sonne, and so the Sonne, not so much with relation to the Vnion, and so the Sonship. As the Sonne was a dispensation of the Father to the rest of his brethren, as in the power of the Father he dyed, and so satisfied the Law in the Letter; and so satisfied the consciences of sinners, as he was the way through which the Father declared; and brings home love to men.

Thus God was in Christ reconciling men to himselfe; and yet this dispensation of the Father, was but a fleshly dispensation, comparatively with a more Spirituall, though Glorious in it selfe, to Soules under that dispensation; this fleshly righteousness, answering a fleshly transgression.

Thus likewise hath he given Ordinan-

es answerable to this fleshly dispensation ; wherein when he pleaseth he appeares in, and through those Ordinances : yet note, that God never appeares in any fleshly dispensation to his people ; that so, he might keepe them in the flesh : but that through these, he might bring up souls to himselfe, in the Spirit. He appeares as it were in flesh, that so he might deliver us into the Spirit ; this being Gods end from everlasting in all his dispensations to the sons of men.

Hence it is, that Souls taught of God thus presse forward in that light & power, and nothing short of this perfection, can so satisfie them, as to rest in, or under any fleshly dispensation below, or without this perfection, no, not in the knowledge of *Christ* after the flesh, &c. for by the one we come to see our selves one with the Father in the Son, by the other we see our selves one in the Father with the Son.

## CHAP. VI.

### *GOD in the SAINTS.*

**G**OD, who is in himselfe, and in the Son, not only by Vnion, but as a dispensation of Grace to men, is likewise in the

the Saints, and that not as in other Creatures, or other men; but he is in the Saints, as he was in Christ.

First, He is in the Saints by Vnion, and so they are Saints being truly made partakers of his Nature.

Hence it is they are called Christians, they are Christed, and indeed Christ and Christians make but one *Christ*, one anointed, one God fills them both: so that Christ was not only a glorious dispensation of the Father, to sinners, and a figure in his death of what must be done to the fleshly part of the rest of his brethren, and in his Resurrection and Life of our Resurrection in the Spirit with him; that so we might live the same life: but likewise he was a paterne of our perfection, of our Glory in every particular, wherein Saints Vnion with God appeares: But this particular of Saints Vnion, I have minded in a Treatise called, *The Marrow of Christianity*; by reason of which I passe it in this place with the more brevity, referring you unto it, only note it in these particulars.

First, Christ a Son by vertue of his Vnion: so the Saints.

Secondly, made partaker of the same Spirit.

Thirdly, of the same Divine Nature which is all one.

Although it be objected, that the Saints are made partakers of it by promise, Christ really: so was Christ by promise likewise.

First promised, then manifested.

So the Saints in the same nature.

First promised, then manifested; when God comes forth in them, heires to the same Inheritance, which is God, to the same Glory, and shall in conclusion be compleated throughly in the same Unity in all particulars: its so already truly, and they are as Christ, even in this World, although not compleated and perfectly to their apprehensions manifested: nay questionlesse, many pretious soules can yet hardly beleieve their own Glory.

Though this be the ultimate of all Gods dispensations to the sons of men, to bring them to this knowledge of God in them; that so they might live in him, aboye all distractions, troubles, feares; that so they might live to him purely in the spirit: yet for the most part, we live below the knowledge of this Glory, and even without Faith in this particular.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of the S A I N T S Communion with G O D,  
And each with other.*

**U**NION alwaies produceth Communion, and in truth its the ground of Communion, there is no true, reall Communion without it.

I shall minde a word, what it is to have Communion with God ; because it is a word oftner expressed then understood or distinguished; and truly brethren its a glorious word, when a Soule is really, not in fancy, but indeed posselt with this Glory, to have Communion with the Father and the Son.

I shall unfold this mystery of Saints communion with the Father, under two words, if words may not darken wifdome.

To have communion and Fellowship with the Father, its to be one in common with God ; to have Fellowship is to bee Gods Fellow : so is Christ, so are Saints; whatever is the Fathers is the Sonner, for they have the Son; and not only so, but they are Son, and so they have the Father, and are in the Father, in the Spirit, in his Love,

In his Life, in his Glory; there is nothing which is the Fathers, but it is the Saints, all is yours; whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or life, or any thing, all is yours.

Oh that you did but know it, that you did but enjoy it, although but by Faith, that so you might be saved by Hope, then you would waite for the accomplishment of it; For he that overcometh shall inherit all things, and the second Death shall have no power over him.

This is to have Communion and Fellowship with the Father, to be one in Communion with him, to be the Fathers Fellow in all things, as the Wife is the Husbands.

Secondly, To have Fellowship with God, is, to have Fellowship with him in the exchanges of Loves, in the communications of secrets, and heart-discoveries, in participating with each other in all conditions.

Oh the sweet exchanges of Love that passes between God, and a soul living in him, who is Love.

The Father ever anon breathing forth Love, making more full discoveries of himselfe in the spirits of Saints; that workes up the soule afresh to admire Mercy, to rejoyce in God; and the Fathers condition is a condition



condition of glory at all times; and he is still drawing up the soule of his Son into the same glory, until he hath perfected him with himselfe in glory: the Son sometimes is in darknesse, but lookes up to the Father for deliverance; the Father either delivers him immediately, or else gives in an answer of grace, and so will communicat with the soul in the darke, rather then leave it without comfort.

Thus when a Soule once comes into the knowledge of its Union, it presently, according to its measure, enjoyes Communion and Fellowship, as the Wife with the Husband.

And so God and the Soul being thus united, they now live together, they walke and talke together, they eate and drinke together, they recreate themselves in the new and fresh exchanges of Love with each other, but all in the spirit; these words are spirit and life to the soule experienced; In them therefore, let none judge it blasphemy, through their ignorance in the knowledge of it.

And as Saints have communion thus with the Father, and the Son: so they have communion each with other in the spirit, which flows from the same union; and this communion is either,

First,



First, In the common enjoyment of all things together in the Spirit; for this is the Saints priviledge, all hath as much right to and in God, as one, although many know it not, and more enjoy it not, because its not manifested in them.

There is no one excellency or enjoyment in God, but its common to all the Saints; they all have a right to it, and in it, each with other: so that *Saints* have a *fellowship* together in the *Father*; they are all *fellows* in the *Fathers* love, light and glory; no one above or superior to each other, although some claim a superiority; they are least in *knowledge*, its true, God manifests more to some than others, not because they are or shal be more than their brethren, but that they might be helpers to their brethren.

Christ is no more then a Christian, for all *Saints* are his brethren, beirs, co-beirs, joynt-beirs, and shal see themselves, as he is: so that

1. There is amongst *Saints* the communion of brethren in the spirit, fellows in the spirit; whatever superiority may be amongst men, yet in Christ they are all one.

O, that this were more known in power among Saints: And so,

2. From this unity and community in the spirit, flows sweet communications of love each to

to other; they are one, and therefore they have fellow-feeling of each others conditions. If one enjoy God sweetly, others rejoyce with him: if one be in dark, or under dark apprehensions of God, others are sensible of it, and as much as may be will be there with him: if one enjoy more light, and live more in the apprehensions of the love and liberty of the Gospel, he makes it known to others, that so they might have a community with him in it; and this unity in the spirit, produceth community in temporals, as well as spirituales. He that seeth his brother to want, and stunneth up the bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

This unity in the spirit transformes soules into the nature, into the love of God; that now he is from a disposition within him not a letter without him, ready to doe good to all, but especially to brethren with him, borne of the same immortall seed, the word of God, which endures for ever.

O, that this communion amongst Saints in the spirit, were more known amongst us, that we could see and say indeed, That we are come to the spirits of just men made perfect.

I deny not a communion with God in Ordinances, and a Communion of Saints in the same: Provided, it be indeed with God,

and indeed with Saints, and not with Ordinances in stead of God, and Ordinances, and Men in stead of Saints; those who hold Communion under this dispensation, may enjoy God in it, and have communion each with other as Saints: and I should rather be with them in it, though not under it, than offend them: Yet this I can say, God is most satisfactory when enjoyed in the purest light, and nearest relation; and the ends of God in these, are for creatures good, not his; that souls who as yet cannot come near him, might see him farther off, and so have some communion with him, some sweet discoveries of love from him; and when he intends to draw souls nearer to him, he wil then darken those windows through which perhaps formerly they have seene him, and so at a distance have had some fellowship with him, he wil put an end to those fleshly discoveries and apprehensions; and truly Christians, in one respect its but little trouble to me, when I see precious souls loosing not their first love, but their first joy, flowing in through these; by reason of which, they have bin built up in those things without them (though true) yet now I expect to see some more glorious discoveries of God, brought forth in them, and the greater light darkning

darkning, and one glorying the letter.  
Mean while Saints who are in the spirit,  
and judge of things after the spirit, hold  
communion in the spirit, though under  
various dispensations, which occasions  
various apprehensions, yet in the head they  
are one.

## CHAP. VIII

*Truth, What it is*

**A**Nd dear Christians, there is now a  
dates much dispute, I had almost said,  
much discord, about truth, what it is, and  
truely did wee but once know truth in the  
power and glory of it, it would soone end  
discords amongst us.

I shal at present give forth my apprehen-  
sions of it, and that from experience too. I  
give you the definition of truth, to thy ap-  
prehension thus:

God is truth, and there is no truth below  
or besides God, without God. I question not  
but that there are true relations of God, and  
dispensations from God, but God is the  
truth of them, and without him, there is  
no truth to any man, no truth in any  
man.

Obje.

*Object.* It is said that Christ is the truth and the life.

*Ans.* True: But how?

Either first, as he was and is the true God, or as the true God was in him: so he was and is the truth, as hee was the great God, the everlasting Father, even God blessed for ever.

Or secondly, He was the truth, as he was a dispensation of the Father, although the Father unto the sons of men; and so declared the love, even the everlasting love of truth unto his brethren.

Yet, this be pleased to note by the way; That although a dispensation of truth be manifested truly in the Son, from, or by the God of Truth; yet if thou dost not see and enjoy God, who is the truth of that dispensation, it is but a lie in thy soul; that there is such a dispensation of love to sinners is truth; but what is that to him that enjoyes not the true God in it.

The like may be said of any other dispensations, Ordinances, Prayers, Tears, any actings, though such as the soul apprehends are commanded by the true God: yet if the soul doe not enjoy God, who is truth in them, which hee likewise enjoyes without them, if at all; I say, they are no truth to  
such

Each a soul, and he that thinks he knows  
God and truth, because he knows ordinan-  
ces, formes and duties, &c. not knowing  
and enjoying the true God in all, knows no  
truth at all.

Truly, my dear ones, I can in some mea-  
sure return and see, and say, *All is vanity that*  
*mine eyes have beheld under and below the Sun;* I  
see God to be all, and all things below and  
besides God is but a like.

And, O that Saints could more come to  
dwell in God, and to see the vanity of all  
things, otherwise then as they see God in  
them, and as they are raised up to that cen-  
tre: How would this put an end to quar-  
rellings and contentions about shadows?  
catching for the most part at the shadow,  
neglecting the substance, or at best, not be-  
ing so possest with the substance, as to see  
the shadowes to be but vanity; and so, to  
see and say, *That the former things are past*  
*away;* we are children, and delight to be  
so, feeding on milke at the best like babes,  
being afraid of stronger meat; though  
*Paul*, when he was a man put away childish  
things.

O, how have, or rather how shall many  
precious ones, one day see and say? How  
have I set up one thing and another for  
truth,



truth, running from mountain to hill,  
from one forme to another, seeking the li-  
ving amongst the dead, perhaps many times;  
but now, loe this is truth, and there is  
none else: *This is the LORD, and I have  
waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his  
salvation.* And when once the vail is taken  
away, you will then no more take shadows  
for substance, bondage for liberty, but the  
glorious Lord himself shall be your place of  
liberty.

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## CHAP. IX.

Of the true knowledge of this GOD  
of TRUTH.

**A**Nd as the apprehensions of men have  
bin exceeding various concerning this  
God of truth; so for the most part have they  
known him, and judged of him from excee-  
ding carnall and fleshly grounds; for to  
know God by his works, is to know him no  
other waies then a Heathen or moral man  
may know him: its true, *The heavens declare  
the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his han-  
ds worke, and all the works of God wonderfully de-  
clare the glory of God.*

In



In a minde Spiritually enlightened; but the  
works of God without us do not declare God  
as he is in himselfe, or as he is in *Saints*, but  
to come higher, its true, God is declared in  
*Scripture*; yet to know God no otherwise  
then as he is declared in *Scripture*, is to know  
God no otherwise then a natural man may  
know him; to know God as he is declared  
without us, either in word or workes, is  
no more then a natural man may attaine  
unto; there is no speech nor Language where  
one or both of these are not: And accord-  
ingly is God known, but to know God tru-  
ly and savingly, is to know him as he makes  
knowne himselfe in the spirits of his People;  
there is no knowledge of God, but in his owne  
light, *In his light we see light.*

What is that knowledge of God to mee,  
that another man enjoyes, if I am not one  
in the same?

For me to speake of God because another  
speakes of him, and to be able to talk much  
of God, as I reade of him in *Scripture*, not be-  
ing made one in the same Truth; I see and  
speake but what another hath spoken, and so  
may speake truly sometimes of God, but it  
is by hear-say, another mans truth, but not  
mine; and so I doubt many a soule boasts in  
another mans light; but to know God from  
a spiritual

a spiritual discovery of himselfe in the *spirits* of his People, by which the Soule enjoyes what it knowes, and so sees God spiritually in al things, and so enjoyes God in al things; this knowledge of God is true and exceeding glorious.

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## CHAP. X.

### Of the *SCRIPTURE*.

**C**ONCERNING the *Scripture*, although I shal not question the truth of it, yet I shal propound these three things considerably concerning it.

First, That it is not sufficient in it selfe as it is a Letter, or word written, to teach or bring any man to the knowledge of God; although God be declared in it, yet that declaration without God, powerfully working in the declaration of himselfe, to and in the *spirits of men*; They never by this or any other meanes come to the true and saving knowledge of him: yet,

Secondly, Some make too much of *Scripture*, setting it up in the roome of the *Spirit*, and so it is indeed become an *Idol*, not in it self, but through that *Idolatri* which dwells in the hearts of men: For,

First,

First, Some say that it is the *Spirit*, and that there is no *Letter* in it; If these make it not an *Idol*, I know not what an *Idol* is.

Secondly, Others know no other *touchstone* or trial, no other *light* by which they judge of *Truth*: thus putting it in the roome of the *Spirit*, who is *light*, and the greater *light* to make an *Idol* of it, for they say, they cannot know *Truth* untill they bring it to the *letter* for triall: thus making an *Idol* of the *Letter*, setting it up in the roome of God, declaring themselves to be exceeding carnall, if not without the *Spirit*: For men may be very carnal in their apprehensions, and yet not wholly without the *Spirit*, *Babes in Christ*: For he that knowes not *Truth*, but as he reads it *without him*, may much question if he know it at all: And this is the reason men are so tost to and fro, because they are led so much by a *Letter* without them, not discerning *Truth* in its owne *light*, and so according to the different apprehensions about the *Letter*, so are men tost to and fro in their judgements: Whereas to know *Truth* from its owne discovery, and to judge of it in its owne *light*, establiseth a *soule* for ever: hence its come to passe that there is so much blindness and darkness in the things of

God, so many strange opinions of God, and about the things of God, in taking up rules from, and judging of things according to the letter; thence is fetcht the grounds of all, there its hatcht; and from thence brought forth, there its bred and maintained: Not that I say, the faults on Scripture, but on mens Idolatrous lying and perfidious hearts thus to abuse it, in making that use of it for which it was never written.

*Obj.* Its said, *I say. 8. 20. To the Law and to the Testimony; if any man speake not according to this word, it is because there is no light in him.*

*Ans.* True, there is the Law and Testimony in the Spirit, as well as in the Letter; The law of God is in the heart, there its written, and there it testifies the truth of God; And if any man speake not according to this rule, it is because there is no light, or morning, risen in him: The spirituall man judgeth all things, yet he himselfe is judged of no man.

*Obj.* Its said, *Gal. 6. 16. That who so walketh according to this rule, peace shall be upon him, &c.*

*Ans.* True, but that is not the rule of the Letter, but of the Spirit, even the rule of the new man, Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Read the words before, and

and you shal see it, there is nothing of any  
value but the *new creature*: And who so walketh  
according to this rule, peace shall be upon him,  
¶

And truly Brethren its my earnest desire  
to see soules to live more in the *Spirit*, and  
lesse in the *Letter*, and then they wil see  
that we judge of the *Letter* by the *Spirit*,  
and not of the *Spirit* by the *Letter*, which oc-  
casions so much ignorance amongst us, and  
those who professe themselves to be our  
teachers, are chiefe in this trespassse; and how  
then can they teach others, who know not  
*Truth* themselves, as they say, but as they  
reade it without them, and so at the best  
speake but other mens *light*, and if they mis-  
understand what other men have written,  
then they speake *falsehood* instead of *Truth*:  
thus is *Scripture* abused my many, by most, in  
making too much of it, making an *Idol* of it:  
Yet,

Thirdly, As *Scripture* is abused by most in  
making too much of it, so it is by many, in  
making too little of it, looking on it as a  
thing of nought, as from the *flesh*, and not  
as from the *Spirit*, questioning the truth of  
it, not acknowledging it to be, as it is in it  
selfe, a *Declaration of God*, who is *Truth*: Not  
that I minde every letter or circumstance in  
C 2 it,

*A General Epistle*

it, but for the substance of it, as it declares purely the God of Truth.

So it is without question to me a word of Truth; I know right well that it is not the Word of God in the most strict sense, according to what is written in *Job. 1. 1.* yet I know it is that Word in which God is declared: Neither that I am ignorant of the possibility, nay the probability of corruption in it, and that in the Greeke and Hebrew too, commonly called the *Original*; although it be true, no man ever living saw the *Original* Copies, but as it hath beene carried through the hands of *Papists*; And the truth is, we have all from them; and the greatest *Scholars* are as farre from ever seeing the *Original* Copies of *Scriptures*, as any *English* man, but as their *Fathers* preserved them, and their *Masters* have taught them, so they know them, but no otherwise.

But this is not my rule or ground to Judge of *Scripture*, if it were, my *Faith* must depend upon humane testimony as well as others, and then might I well doubt of the truth of them.

For to speake after the manner of men, there is no other then humane testimony, and so no other ground of *Faith* in the Letter, but a humane *Faith*: For the Teachers of the



the people say, it is thus and thus in the *Original*, when the truth is; they never saw any other *Original* then came from Rome; it was preserved and delivered to them by that trusty Messenger; if he have dealt falsely, then they are deceived; for they have no higher ground of Faith then this, they tell the people it is thus and thus.

Who told them so?

Why, The *Pope*; and then they tell the people its thus in the *Original*; The case being thus plainly and in truth, it makes many an honest Soule doubt of the truth of it; now notwithstanding all this, there is a way by which *Saints* may come to judge of Scripture, and that according to the *Original* too; that is, by the Spirit, which is the *Original* of all Truth.

So that I can look upon the Scripture, and see much glorious Truth in it, I cannot but by experience set to my seal, that it is Truth; not that it is any Article of my Faith to believe every word or circumstance there written, but what Truth God hath made known in me, that I must acknowledge, not condemning that which I know not, though not confirming that which to me is not known.

Therefore my exhortation, or rather my

desire to you Christians, who have slight thoughts of it, is, that those thoughts of yours might be suspended, and that you owne Truth, and acknowledge it where ever you finde it.

Certainly if once you live in him who is Truth, you must owne Truth, or rather the true relations of those in whom Truth is manifested: I know that the knowledge of any thing without it is nothing, if our Souls be not made one with and in the God of Truth.

And because Scripture is so much abused on both hands, I cannot passe without a word or two further concerning it at present.

First, Many of those who are both Scholars, and, as they say, Teachers in England, affirme, that Englishmen never read the Scripture, because they never read it in the Original, that is, in Greeke and Hebrew: Now marke, what ground have men to believe that which they never read nor saw, neither is there any ground of Faith for men as men, but the word of a Priest, which ground is meerly humane, and not binding.

If they say we have the Scripture in English, then an Englishman may understand Scripture as well as them: But if an Englishman have the

the *Scripture* upon humane *Trust*, then the greatest *Scholars* have the same, for they never saw the *Originall Copies*, as you have heard, no more then any other *Englisb-man*.

Note further, The *Seventy Translators* say in our *Translations* it is thus; Comes another younger brother, and saith it is thus, and so contradicts the *Seventy Interpreters* commanded by the *King* to doe it.

Now who shall the ignorant, *Illiterate Englisb-man* believe, *Seventy* or one?

Nay, suppose *seventy times seventy* say it is otherwise, yet who shall the poore man believe? I leave it to the judicious to judge.

And now let any consider if these do not truly teach men to deny the *Scripture*; for if *English men* have not the *Scripture*, as they say, and they themselves never saw it more then others, and yet contradict each other in what they have seene: One saith, it is thus, another thus: what ground of *Faith* is there for a man in what they say?

Besides, I have seene severall *Greeke Translations* with some contradictions to each other; and some say there are sixteen severall *Greeke Copies* in some things contradicting each other: now which of these is the *Truth*? who knowes?

And

And further, thus much to me is question-  
lesse, that the *Scripture* must of necessity suffer  
violence, in being by man brought so direct-  
ly into *Grammaticall Rules*: I must confesse I  
cannot judge that the *Scripture* was ever  
written according to the strict rules of  
*Grammar*, as now it is in *Greece* and *Hebrew*;  
unlesse any could perswade me to thinke  
that poore *Fisher-men*, and the like, were as  
well furnished with the *Smoake* of the bottom-  
lesse pit, as *University men*, and that they spake  
as truly the Language of the *Beast*, as men  
now adaeies. This have I incerted, not that I  
intend or desire in the least to derogate from  
the truth of *Scripture*, but rather that none  
might abuse it as it is a *Letter*, to live upon  
it without any further *Seale* or testimony  
then most receive with it; neither that it  
may be slighted on the other hand, nay, that  
Some cannot slight *Truth* who is made one,  
and in *Truth*.

And I minde these things the rather, be-  
cause I question not, but that some who are  
well furnished with humanity, accounting  
too highly of it, and yet are *Teachers* of o-  
thers, who are notwithstanding precious to  
the *Father*, whom he wil take off themselves in  
his time; which is my earnest desire to see  
effected in them.

## CHAP. XII.

*The nature and glory of this knowledge of GOD  
in the Spirit.*

**T**His knowledge of God in the Spirit, as he makes knowne himself in us; is exceeding glorious.

First, It is abundantly satisfying and consolating unto the soule made one in him; for to know God so, as to know our interest in him, is to know him in whom is all fulnesse, and so it is to know our interest in all fulnesse; for he that truly enjoyes God; truly enjoyes all things, which abundantly satisfieth the soule at all times, even as with marrow and fatnesse; it abundantly sweetens all conditions and dispensations from God; when once a soule sees God, and enjoyes God in all things, the soule is sweetly satisfied under darke and dismall dispensations, to fleshly apprehensions; it can sweetly rejoyce and sing in all conditions, giving glory to God in the biggest.

Secondly, It is of a transforming nature; that soule that truly knowes God, is by degrees transformed into the same nature and glory.

The

## A General Epistle

The knowledge of God doth not leave Soules blinde and ignorant, carnal, foolish, formal and vaine, but it makes them partakers of the same *Divine Nature*; it gives the Soule not only an interest in God, that so he can see God, and all his wisdome, power, infiniteness, glory, &c. to be its owne, but its made partaker of the very nature of all these, and so changed into the very glory of all these. Its holy in the holinesse of the Father, wise in the wisdome of the Father, strong in the strength of the Father, lives through the Life of the Father, Because I live, saith Christ, you shall live also. So that soules made partakers of God, are made one in the nature and glory of God. This is mystery indeed to a carnal apprehension, known only of soules taught of God, and living in God; this likewise makes soules capable of the knowledge of Mystery, and so able to judge of all things; its only the *Spiritual mans* priviledge, who looks not so much at the Letter for knowledge, as at the Spirit, being satisfied in this knowledge of him, who is the substance of all Truth, of all good; that though it apprehends not something written, yet it knows him who is the Original of all Truth, in whom it enjoyes al fulnesse, even life for evern.

Truly friends, did you in any measure apprehend



prehend the glory and excellency of the knowledge of God in you, as he is the fountain from whence all flowes, into whom all returns, you could not be so much satisfied in streams, broken cisterns, uncertain divisions about externals; so much exalt flesh which is but grasse, live so low and carnal to a letter without you, if once you saw the righteousness of the law fulfilled within you: so walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

## CHAP. XII.

### *A Christians Rule of Obedience.*

**T**HE Spirit being indeed the prime Rule of a Christians obedience; its true, we have done, and yet doe looke much after a line, much unto a rule without us, not that I condemn looking into the Word written, but when soules know no other rule of life, but that without this argues much fleshli- nesse.

The Spirit of God, who is God, is the alone Rule of a spirituall Christian, although a Rule without may be usefull to the weak: yet the spirituall man judgeth all things, by what Rule? by the rule of the Spirit, the Law in the old Testament was written in tables of stone, The

Law

Law of the New Testament is written in the heart.

And truly, brethren, I must tell you, that I know no *Covenant* but that in the Spirit, and so no law but that in the Spirit, which is indeed the law of life and liberty, a law condemning, destroying flesh, yet a law in which there is no condemnation to them in *Christ*, a law producing obedience, not after the oldness of the letter, but the newness of the Spirit, a *Law of Light*, by which wee judge and square every act, a *Law of power* in which we act, a *Law of liberty* from all other *Laws* and condemnations; And this I can tell you by experience, that until I was delivered from the *flesh* into the Spirit,

into this *Law of light, life, liberty and glory*, I knew not what *life and liberty* was, talk of it I confesse I could, from what I found written without, but not from what I found written within; I could not say, I should stand fast for ever, because the letter said, *It was the believers priviledge*: but now I can say it, because the Spirit hath given in that testimony within me, I could then strive to be holy in conversation, to answer the letter: but now am I made holy in conversation, from, or in the power of the holy Spirit within.

Now

Now I see that *external* *things* according to a rule without, is nothing, if not flowing from a principle and power of life and love within; and its this *law in the spirit* that must subdue flesh and corruption, if ever it be subdued in you.

I tell thee, *dear heart*, the reason why thou art so much overcome with the lusts of the *flesh*, thou art so much unable to subdue thy corruption, its because thou sets about it in the strength of the flesh; thou seest sinne by a *letter* without thee, and thou strive st to reforme thy selfe according to that *Letter*; Dost thou thinke that ever flesh is like to subdue flesh? No, its the Spirit. O, then give up all to him, *Let thy strength be to sit still* from fleshly strivings; wait on the Spirit, which will be in thee not only a *light* discovering, but a fire consuming fleshlinesse and fleshly actings, transforming thee more and more into the *glorious liberty* of the sons of God, which is the longing of thy soul; where thou shalt see thy self freed both from sinne and sorrow, *For the former things are past away*, &c.

Oh! This glorious rule of the new man, its worth thy looking after, and querying into, *One day here is worth a thousand elsewhere*.

Object.

**Object.** Doe not the Scripture in the new Testament presse men unto duty? And did not the Apostles write their Epistles as rules of life unto the Saints?

**Ans<sup>r</sup>.** 1. Its true, so may a word written be at present a Rule unto a weake Christian, who is in some measure made partaker of the Spirit; Christians may be carnall, 1 Cor. 3. 3. weake and yet spirituall; so Paul, I am carnall; yet Paul was spirituall, he had experience of it, through living much in the Spirit: So that I question not but soules may enjoy God, who walks conscientiously to a letter without, while they are under that dispensation; and truly, its that which I desire, to see men act rather to a letter without them by the Spirit within them, then to see them flying off the letter, before they are brought off by the power of the Spirit: and hence it comes to passe that they are tost in their apprehensions, and so hath no law to walk by, either within them, or without them: Its the condition of many who flie off the letter upon notion or heare-say of the Spirit; and having lost the Law in the letter, being without it in the Spirit lose all: Therefore my intention in writing, is not to fetch off any from the Letter: but rather to informe you of the mystery of the

the Law in the Spirit; that so the same Spirit working in you, may deliver you into its own light and glory.

This one thing I cannot but minde you, That this glorious dispensation in and of the spirit, will prove the fall of many in, though not of Israel, and that upon these two rocks: either,

1. In opposing, so persecuting the spirit; declaring themselves to be but men in the flesh, though judging themselves to be in the spirit; Its the property of the son of the bond-woman, to persecute the son of the free-woman; and flesh will oppose spirit, till overcome by the Spirit.

2. Others in getting onely a notion of the spirit without the power, wil turn carnal and fleshly under that notion, and so take liberty in sin under the notion of liberty in Spirit: so that in this dispensation of the Spirit onely will Saints leave all the world behinde them: get into what formes you will, there will the world be with you; but if once you are delivered out of all sinne into this glorious liberty, then shall you be in the pure enjoyment of God in the spirit; Where shall be no idoldter, nor adulterer, none that loves or makes a lie, none but those written in the Lambs booke of life: This is the glorious excellency of

*of the Law in the spirit, and the excellent Rule of the Christians obedience by which they are delivered from all laws of bondage and condemnation, Into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*

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CHAP. XIII.

*Of the Mystery of the CROSSE of  
CHRIST.*

**T**Here is much talking of the *Crosse* of Christ, and truly its a glorious mytery, if rightly and truly known; but its to be doubted that many, if not most, and that of Christians, do look more at the *crosse* without, then at the *crosse* within; not that al deny the knowledge of *Christ* as he died for sinne, as a glorious dispensation of the Father unto sinners; but that which I desire is to see Christians exercised more in the internal part and mytery of Truth: to know the *crosse* of Christ truly, is to see and know your selves crucified with Christ: *I am crucified with Christ*, saith Paul, and so can every spirituall Christian say. To be baptized into the death of Christ, to be like him in his Death, and in his Resurrection, is the way to be like him in his Life, and in his Glory.



Glory. To be crucified with Christ is to suffer the death of *fleshlines*, of sin, and the sinful nature, as the *flesh* of Christ suffered death, so must our fleshly part die with Christ, this death is to sin, to world, to fleshly wisdom and fleshly righteousness; to all fleshly excellency and fleshly glory, it must all passe under the *crosse* of Christ, and when the *crosse* of Christ hath thus past upon all flesh in the spiritual Christian, then shall there be an entering into the glory of the Father. Its in vain to talke of the Crosse of Christ in the history, and to be ignorant of it in the mystery: to comfort thy self in that Christ died for thee, if *flesh* in its glory be still living in thee: O therefore let thy soul seek to know the mystery, the power and efficacy of the death of Christ in thee, that through thy knowledge of thy part in the power of his death, thou maist see and enjoy thy part in his Resurrection and life: For if thou beest dead with him, thou shalt likewise live with him; if thou suff. r with him, thou shalt reigne with him. And as its the work of Christ in thee thus to destroy *flesh*, so questionless shalt thou finde much spiritual opposition within thee from *flesh*, even as Christ did from the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*: For we wrestle not only with *flesh* and blood, &c.

D

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIII.

## Of the Kingdome of HEAVEN.

**A**Nd as we have beene low and carnall for the most part in our apprehensions concerning God, so likewise concerning Heaven, the habitation of God: its true, God is said to dwell in Heaven; not that hee is confined to any place, but that hee dwels in glory, and that is heaven: its true, we have looked upon God to be above the firmament in a glorious place, and there he dwels, that was his place, and that we call Heaven; now its true, that the Scripture speakes of Heaven, and Heaven in Scripture hath different acceptions, but to speake plainly and properly of the Kingdome of Heaven; That Kingdome and that Heaven that I intend at present is, the Heaven of Gods presence, the Heaven of glory, &c.

Now this Heaven is, where God manifestts himselfe in love, there is Heaven; its true God dwels in Heaven, viz. in glory continually, he is never out of Heaven, therefore I say,

First, Though Heaven is not enjoyed by Saints in all places where God is, for God is every

every where, in Hell as well as in Heaven, in bad as well as in good, though in a different manner, and so in relation to manifestation; Heaven is not every where, yet in relation to God, hee enjoyes himselfe every where, hee is in his full glory in darke dispensations to creatures apprehensions, and in respect of God, Heaven may be said to be every where, though creatures, nay though Christians many times see it not; for the different appearance of God in creatures produceth different conclusions in creatures, God is in all places, its true, but he is not in all places of men, manifesting light and love, and so communicating life, and liberty, and glory in all, perhaps he kindles wrath in the spirits of some, but declares himself a God of love in the spirits of others; this is Heaven, God manifesting himselfe in love and grace, makes Heaven; *The Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and it consists not in meat or in drinke, but in righteousnesse and peace, and joy in the holy Spirit*: and truly for that fancy of looking after a Heaven so farre away, I know not from whence it first came, unless those who are pleased to call themselves *Divines*, learned it from *Astronomers*, who write of particular Spheres, and so they conclude the highest must needs be Heaven, and there

God must dwell; Because its like they never saw God nor Heaven, therefore conclude, they both must be in some place farre away out of sight; and its true lo they are out of the sight of men indeed, for never a man as a man did yet see, or is ever like to see God or Heaven: no my beloved friends, *No man can see God and live*; its true they may see his back-parts, for God is seen in his works, and in all his dispensations, but to see the Father manifesting himself as he is infinitely glorious, Who can see him thus and live?

Truly the glorious appearing of the great God in his people, will be the death of the first man of flesh; And then the soule sees God, and dwels in Heaven: not but that God may be seen and enjoyed in and through dispensations; but this is not the third the highest Heaven; those are Tabernacles that must vail themselves, to the glorious vision, to a greater glory.

And truly in vain do those souls talk of, and look after Heaven, when they are dead, that doe not know Heaven, and live in it, while they are alive.

Its common amongst many, not only of the common and carnal ones, but those who profess themselves *Christians*, that if they can walk in such a way as that they may get heaven  
at

at last, they look at no more: Alas, *this is a carnal imagination; if you know not heaven now, and live in it now, you are not like for all that I know, to live in it hereafter.*

*Obj.* God saith, *Heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool, &c.*

*Ans.* True, Heaven is Gods Throne, that is, Glory is his Throne, he sits there continually; and so he sits gloriously in the spirits of his people, there is Heaven too; and the earth is his footstool, that is, all the whole Creation, for it is all but earth to him (and he forms it out of the earth) it is all his footstool, he hath it all in subjection to himself, he stands upon the neck of it all, and he will bring in subjection that earth and flesh in the Spirits of Christians too, which now so much trouble them.

A glorious word, when thy soul shall be able to speake of this by experience, when thou shalt see all other Heavens and Earth flie away at the presence of the Lord, even at the presence of the mighty God of Jacob, Then shalt thou be able to sing new songs of praise, who art redeemed from the earth, and to see and say: *The Lord God omnipotent reigneth; And this I can tell thee, dear Christian, for thy comfort, that as truly as God treads upon all the earth, and subjects all to himself, even*

thy earthlinesse within thee is subject unto him.

So will he subject all earthlinesse, and the powers of darknes unto thee; Thou shalt tread them all under feet, The God of peace will tread Satan under feet shortly.

Obj. Paul saith, He was in the third heavens, was not that the Heaven of heavens, a place of glory above the firmament?

Ans. Nay, but its true, it was the Heaven of Heavens, that is, the highest dispensation of God manifesting himselfe in glory.

There are different manifestations and discoveries of God in glory, and the lowest is Heaven, where God is enjoyed; although the highest or third Heaven vails the former glory, as the light of the Sun, the light of the Moone and Stars: so that Paul was in the highest or most glorious manifestation of God in him, which he calls the third Heaven.

Obj. But its said, That heaven is above, and Christ ascended into heaven, &c.

True, Heaven is above, that is, above the apprehensions of men, Eye hath not seene it, ear hath not heard it, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive it, but God reveales it to his Saints by his Spirit; nay further, Heaven  
is



is not only above the apprehensions of men, but many Christians live much below the knowledge, much more below the enjoyment of this Mystery; to this purpose see Pauls desire for the Ephesians, who seem to be the most knowing people to whom he writes: Ephesians 1. 15, 16. and Chap. 3. 18, 19.

*Object.* But is there no greater measure or degree of Glory to be expected of Saints after this life?

*Ans.* There is no other glory for the nature of it, then what Saints who enjoy God now shall ever enjoy, for God himself being now enjoyed, there is nothing else to be enjoyed that is more glorious; Yet

2. I do not at present question, but that as there are different glories, or more and lesse glorious manifestations of that one glory here; yet when this body of flesh is laid down, there will be a more compleating or perfecting in this glory; then shall the soule be transformed into, and possessed with that glory, which hath been variously manifested in it formerly, &c.

*Qu.* What is the kingdom of heaven?

*Ans.* The Kingdome of Heaven is God, and Saints in God are posselt with God, who is the Kingdome; he is both the King and

Kingdome, and glory of the Kingdome, Saints made one with and in God, and so being posselt with God, God enjoyes himself in them, and they enjoy God and glory in himself; and this is the Kingdom and the Dominion and glory given to the Saints; and the Saints posselt the Kingdome for ever.

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## CHAP. XV.

### Of PERFECTION.

**Quest.** IS it possible for any to attain perfection in this life?

**Answer.** In this Life as wee are men, it is true, there is no perfection, there is flesh and fleshly aſtings: But out of this life (I mean the life of the first Adam) in the life of the second, there is nothing else but perfection, though creatures, nay Christians apprehend it not, for the new Creature, which after God is created in righteouſneſſe, and true holineſſe, is perfect, THE NEW MAN CHRIST formed within is perfect; it is true, there is a fleshly part which rebels, yet not defiles the ſpiritual; therefore Paul could ſay, It is no more I, but ſinne: And he that is borne of God ſinneth not, his ſeed of purity and perfection remains in him,

And

And according to the measure of the manifestation of light in the soul, it is transformed into the glory of it: and so soules see their perfection, its true, such a perfection as to be freed from the body of sin.

I do not yet see until this body of flesh be laid down, yet a perfection according to the measure of the souls changing into the nature and glory of the Father, is to be expected and shall be enjoyed in this life.

The measure of it I limit not: Paul professeth after perfection, and saith: *Let as many as are perfect be of this minde*; that is, let those who know their perfection in the inner man, presse after the accomplishment of it in the finall abolishing of the flesh.

Obj. *Is this body of flesh capable to prevent the Saints glory?*

Ans. Yea; to their apprehension, for this body of flesh, and the internall part, the body of sinne, being so conjoynd together naturally, that the one is not utterly abolished without the other; and those internal fleshly qualities, though so farre subdued, as troden under feet; and the soul can see and say, that they are indeed *nothing*: yet there is not such a full glory, till both these are laid down for the manifestation of God in his full glory; would end; this body  
without

without, as well as within, *Who can see God and live?*

So that in a word, *Saints*, as *Saints*, are perfect, though not so gloriously perfected in the glorious God as they shall be.

And the truth is, that the Servants of *Christ*, made one with him, have nothing that I know to make knowne to people, especially to *Christians* : but perfection, though men, nay *Saints* through ignorance, are much afraid of this Doctrine.

Yet I say, as there is nothing but perfection to be pressed after, so there is nothing but perfection to be preached; although its true, that those who live in Light, speaks perfection as to divers sorts, so in divers Languages: God gives the tongue of the *Learned* to speak a word in season, yet all perfection as farre as perfect; and all is to bring souls up to the enjoyment of perfection; and of this shall *Saints* be made partakers of in these latter daies more then formerly : how might this Truth; and it will so where it is enjoyed, carry a soul more abundantly after perfection, after the enjoyment of the perfect glory.

Truly, Brethren, this I can say experimentally, that I forget those things which are behind, and presse forward after that price: Not that

I am

*I am already perfect, so as to see all flesh ended, yet so, as to see all flesh wounded and dying; that to me is nothing perfect as a Christian, though not as a man in the first nature, neither ever expecting so to be.*

Beloved, Its a low life for a Christian to looke backe, that so he may fetch comfort out of something past; and they are miserable comforters that advise you so to doe: though I deny not, but a soule may be upheld sometimes under that dispensation of looking backe; but the greatest glory of a Christian is before, the *marke*, the *prize* is before, and the soule that seeth it presseth on, not looking backe.

And truly if once you believed that the glory which is prepared for you might be so gloriously revealed in you while you are here, you would then be more earnest in waiting, in desiring the manifestation of this glory: if you knew the excellent and glorious effects of this Spiritual Kingdom, you would then say, *Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly*; which is my earnest and continued desire both for my selfe and you.

## CHAP. XVI.

## Of HELL

**A**ND as the Soule that enjoyes the apprehensions of the pleased presence of God, lives in Heaven more or lesse, according to the measure of enjoyment; so this is hel to be at a distance from the Fathers love; for I looke at Hell to be no more a locall place then Heaven.

But the Soule living at a distance from the Fathers glory, is truly in darknesse, and so in Hel; and this darknesse, Hel and misery, is according to the various apprehensions of the Soule concerning God; some apprehend more, some lesse wrath from the Almighty: Now as God is the King and Kingdome of light and life, so Satan is the King and Kingdome of darknesse, and the God and Prince of the world: And as God is the power of light and life, so is Satan the power of death and darknesse: As God is the power omnipresent, invisable, glorious and gloriously in himselfe, present in all places, so is Satan the power of darknesse, invisibly present in all places, a power raised up by the Father, yet is not that Father of light and life; one who



who acts nothing but darknesse, with and in whose nature all naturall men are one, untill renewed, and changed by the Spirit; that as God dwels manifesting himselfe in Saints, so Satan the power and prince of darkness dwels in the world; so that greater is he that is in the Saints, then he that is in the World; yet that power that is manifest in the World, acts nothing without, against, or contrary unto the power of light, yet the actings of the power of darkness are not Gods actings, though not acted without, or contrary to him; for that power that acts without or contrary to the power of God, must be equall with or above God; but there is no such power. Now this power of darknesse lives at a distance from the enjoyment of God in love and grace, and so lives in Hel; and all who are possessed with, and made one in this darknesse, lives in Hel: Some see and feelee the torment, the fire of Hel here, to some its reserved untill hereafter; and its that which I see to be a truth, that there is never a Saint but hath beene in hel in some measure, that is, under the power of darknesse.

Object. It is said, that Hel is a place of Torment, that there is fire and brimstone, &c.

Ans. True, and it is so indeed, but not

of materiall Fire and Brimstone, but spiritu-  
ally; these three things make up *hel*, and the  
torment of it.

First, darknesse, utter darknesse, so its cal-  
led in *Scripture*, when the soul is for ever de-  
prived of any light or knowledge of God, as  
a God of Grace and Love, of any Union or  
Communion with Light and Glory.

Secondly, the soules constant and perpe-  
tuall communion and commerce with dark-  
nesse, and his deeds of darknesse, with the  
power and effects of darknesse.

Thirdly, God in these kindling the ap-  
prehensions of wrath, which will be the tor-  
ment perpetually: for it is not *Satans* work  
to torment, but to be tormented; but the  
breath of the Lord as a streame of *Brimstone*  
kindles it; for God is the Fire, or Kindler  
of the Fire of *Hel*; God is Fire in the Saints,  
burning up *hel* and darknesse in them, For  
*our God is a consuming fire*; but he wil be a  
fire kindling everlasting apprehensions of  
wrath in the ungodly: O, consider this you  
that forget God.

I minde this particular not onely,

First, by reason of those carnall and un-  
true apprehensions generally concerning  
it; But,

Secondly, to informe Saints in this par-  
ticular,

particular, that so they seeing themselves delivered from this dark and dismal condition, this Kingdome of darknesse into the Kingdome of light, by the power of light, even into the Kingdome of his deare Son, may admire mercy, and cry, *Grace, Grace*, in its enjoyment of *Grace*; for its the soule that knowes by experience, what it is to be in the darke, that will prize light; its the soule that hath been in hel, that will prize heaven.

In a word, its that soule that hath beene under the power and Prince of darknesse, being now delivered, will rejoyce in being subject to the King of Glory, that once could say, *Satan* reigned, but now can say, *The Lord omnipotent reignes.*

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## CHAP. XVII.

### *Particular Application.*

**T**HE knowledge of God, who is the *Mystery*, is that will put an end to carnall divisions and dissensions amongst Christians; its that we reade of in *Scripture*, and its that which Christians looke for, that the knowledge of God shall abound, that wars, divisions and contentions shall have an end, and that Christians shall serve God with  
 one

one consent, even with one heart.

But how is this like to be accomplished, but in and through this being made one in and with the *mysterie*? When once soules come to see and know God to be all, and that there is nothing without him, all things are nothing but as they are centred in him, and related to him, when they come to know Saints in the spirit, and not in the letter; when they know no man after the flesh but after the spirit; then fleshly and externall things will not occasion divisions.

I munde it thus, one will not say, *I am of Paul*; another, *of Apollo*; a third, *of Cephas*. One will not be a *Presbyter*, another an *Independent*, a third, an *Anabaptist*, as they are called; that is, they will not looke so much after those Formes, be so fleshly in their knowledge of *Christ*, as to say, *Loe here, and loe there is Christ*, that is, here or there, and no where else, not knowing that he is free in dispensing himselfe, not being tied to, or bound up in any Forme whatsoever. And I cannot passe at present without speaking something to all Saints under all dispensations, tending to the uniting of al Saints together in the Spirit.

First, You who go under the name of  
*Presbyterians*.

*Presbyterians.* I cannot but iudge some amongst you to be tender and precious; although I must confesse, that I looke on that Forme to be one of the lowest where *Christ* may be found; although I question not, but that a right *Presbytery* is agreeable to what we finde written in *Scripture*: yet I must tel you, that I know no such *Presbytery* in the world, much lesse amongst you; And I must tell you likewise, that your principles in many things being so low, so carnal, as that I am put to a stand in consideration thereof: Your ignorance in the Covenant of Grace, entailing it to the natural seed: Hence Baptizing, or rather cozening your Infants; calling it, the *Seal of the Covenant*, though there be no Seale but the Spirit, and none are in that Covenant, but Saints: Your Ministers, for the most part, preaching for hire, and you love to have it so, making them your Lords, and almost your rule of Faith and practice, desiring and endeavouring, could you have your purpose, to compell all to walke by your rule, to submit to your light: Doe you not say, *Christ* is here in this Forme, and no where else? How could you else desire to deal so hardly with those who are contrary to you, lest you dealt hardily with *Christ*: Are you not carnall, and walke

as men? Did you but know that God is not tied to this or the other Forme; he is neither here nor there limited nor confined, but makes knowne himselfe, where, when and how he pleaseth: Did you but know that your Forme is the lowest of all Formes that comes near the truth, and therefore the lesse to be esteemed, you would not, you could not be so exact and rigid in it; nay, you would never continue under the practice of it: Behold a little, and see the evil that is couched under it.

First, It makes your Infants Christians, as you say, though they never heard of *Christ*: Is not this a root of bitterness, from whence flows all that grosse ignorance in the Nation? Whence comes those delusions amongst the ignorant ones, that they are Christians, &c. but from this Fountain? Could you but looke up and downe the Nations, and see the wonderfull delusions of souls, under this *Antichristian* invented Forme; O, your hearts would yearne over them, you would have bowels of pity towards them, thousands, and ten thousands, perishing under deluding Formes: Nay, could you but looke at home, see how you account your selves and Children the better for it, and who knowes but that your Children may be de-  
luded



luded under it, as well as others? See againe  
how your *Ministry*, for the most part stands  
corrupted, not onely in admittance, any  
man almost if well furnished with Arts and  
humane abilities, the *smoake of the bottomlesse*  
*pit*, the wisdom of man, which is darknesse,  
ignorance and folly with *God*, confessing or  
owning *Presbytery*, is a meet *Minister* in  
your society; but likewise generally seeking  
themselves, and not you, but yours; if that  
faile, they are gone, keeping you ignorant,  
frighting and firing you from looking af-  
ter the knowledge of *God*, further then they  
reach you; and if you put not into their  
mouths, they even prepare warre against  
you; which if the Lord did but make you  
sensible of your ignorance and folly in these  
things, from the discovery of higher light  
and glory, you would not be so satisfied, did  
you but know that there are various dispen-  
sations from *God* to the sonnes of men: Did  
you but know that *God* is a *Spirit*, and that  
he is the Fountaine, the Light, the life and  
fulnesse of all things, you would not, you  
could not make so much of these your car-  
nall things, nor judge so hardly and harshly  
of those who differ from you: Did you but  
know indeed that we know but in part, and  
that its as possible for you to erre as others,

you could not so earnestly desire to confine others to your *Light*, lest you might possibly lay a burthen of falshood and sinne upon them.

In a word, did you but know that God is a *Spirit*, and he will be worshipped in *Spirit*, and in *Truth*; and that a Christians obedience is due to none but *Jesus Christ*; which is to be performed by, and in the Law of the *Spirit*, which is a Law both of *Light* and power: I say, did you but know this, from being taught by the *Spirit*, you could not, you dare not usurpe any other over the consciences of your brethren, but the *Spirit* of unity, love and peace would rule in you.

Secondly, You who goe under the name and notion of the *Independents*; nay, although its true, I could desire that all the *Saints* were indeed more *Independent* to men, to creatures, to *Formes*, &c. and more *Dependant* upon the great God, the rock and refuge of his people: I must needs tell you, that I see something amisse in you; I am now writing impartially from bowels of tenderneffe and pity to al *Saints*, without respect; therefore suffer a word likewise.

First, Methinkes I see amongst you a *Spirit*, almost ready to say, Lo here is *Christ*,  
viz.

*viz.* in this Forme, ready almost to deny Communion with any else; thus knowing Christ after the flesh, that is, fleshly Formes, and this knowing Christians after the flesh being too carnally rigid in that Forme, and no where else, and yet come not up in your Formes to that Forme of Doctrine prescribed in the Scripture, but rather cleave fast unto those invented Ordinances of men, who have no better Author or Father then the Pope, no better end then deluding *soules*, *viz.* *Infants Baptisme*, &c. herein discovering your ignorance in the knowledge of God, and the *Covenant of Grace*; which is a *Covenant* in the Spirit, and not in the flesh, to and with the spiritual, but not with the natural seed; See *Galath. 3. 29.* Did you but see that God might as wel be in other Formes as this, manifesting himselfe; nay, that God might be enjoyed without all Formes, you could not in any case bee rigid in this Forme, nor would you desire the exaltation of it, &c.

And for you Saints likewise, who goe under the name and notion of *Anabaptists*, though for practising as you judge of the truth, according to what is written; and I confesse you in your practice to be in the highest Forme, according to the Letters, yet

what I see to be amisse, I must at present tell you; Two things I shall minde you of.

First, Your making too much of formes, though according to the Scripture; that this is truth, witnesse, first, your readinesse as soon as any to say, Loe here is Christ, and no where else, as if *Christ* were tied to this Forme; that this is truth, witnesse your unfreenesse to owne Christ in, or to have Communion with Christ in any out of this, nay, calling it the way of God, &c. witnesse your readinesse to deny Christ, to be truly, really, spiritually enjoyed, without all Formes, Ordinances, &c. witnesse your making of your Union in the Letter, the ground of your Communion in the Spirit, not seeing Union in the Spirit, to be the alone true and everlasting ground of Communion in the Spirit. In a word, your too much preferring of one in forme with you, though carnal, before one out of that form, though Spirituall.

Secondly, your great estrangednesse unto the Law in the Spirit, and your too much living in the Law in the Letter: O my beloved, did your soules but know the glorious excellency of the Law in the Spirit, the glorious light, liberty and power of it, you could live under the light, liberty and power of no other Law.

O, its

O, its this *Covenant* in the *Spirit*, that makes Saints glorious in the *Spirit*, glorious within, &c. And did you but know, that God is not tied to this, or any *Forme*, but is free in his dispensations; how he pleaseth, you would not be thus rigid in your *Forme*, you would joy to see Christ in any; and the further the *Forme* seemes to be from *Truth*, the more would you rejoyce to finde a soule there in whom Christ is: Did you see God to be the *Truth* and fulnesse of your *Glory*: Did you see God to be but one, and the Saints *Union* with, and in that one God, how would your soules desire, nay, delight to be one with all the Saints, in that one God, you would see it to be much better to be one in *Spirit*, then one in *Forme*, &c.

And for you Christians, who are for no Churches, denying *Formes* for want of *Ministers*; Is it not your fault and folly likewise to thinke and say, Loe here, or loe there is Christ? Are you not apt to say he is in the *desart*, in the *wilderneffe*, in the private chamber, and no where else? Do you not see and know, that Christ may as well be with others, under other dispensations, as with you? Doe you not likewise know Christ exceedingly after the flesh? Hardly can you

judge those to be Christians, which are not of your minde; or performe a Spirituall action with those, though Spiritual, that sute not to your opinion: did you likewise know Christ more in the mystery, you could not but know Saints in that mystery, though differing in their apprehensions from you, about Externals, or things without.

Thus my deare and precions ones in the Spirit, though held much under Formes: do Religion amongst us consist much in opinion, and according to our opinion we judge of others? But truly I must tel you, the Lord hath taught me to look at Religion to be another thing then *opinion*; to be religious is to be posselt with God, which is that beauty from above: and where I see a soule posselt with God, living in some measure in the light and power of Truth, being made conformable unto it; it is not a difference in opinion that wil to me eclipse and darken the light and glory of that *Soule*.

And truly my dear ones, one thing I cannot but minde you of further; it pities me to see that fleshly disposition that appeares in many, in most amongst you, viz. a readinesse to watch each other for evill, and not for good, to take all advantages against each other therein, to discover the nakednesse



ness of each other. Thus one form watcheth another, and one form reproacheth and persecuteth another, taketh all advantages to disgrace each other; and thus its like to be whilst you live in forms: This is the very ground and root of division, What is the reason of it? why if my religion be bound up in a forme, then any other Forme crosseth it, and this is unsufferable to a soule who lives under formes: And thus will all formes oppose each other, and all formes together wil oppose the Spirit, For the son of the bond-woman will persecute the son of the free-woman, and he that is borne after the flesh will persecute him that is borne after the Spirit; and Saints as farre as they are in and after the flesh wil persecute the Spirit.

But I cannot passe without a word to you my brethren likewise, in whom God hath in a special manner made known himself: who live above, and perhaps without al Ordinances, living in the enjoyment of him, who is the fountain and fulness of your excellency and glory: yet somewhat have I to say unto you.

First, Your readines to judge and censure al Light below what you live in to bee nothing; your readines to judge and censure Saints actings, Saints enjoyment, who live

not

not in your sphere, calling every thing carnall, that is not to you at present Spirituall, not knowing that God may be enjoyed in that, which to us appeares very low. O my brethren, consider who shall beare with the weakes, if not the strong? Who shall be tender to soules under darke dispensations, if not those who live in light? Is God with weak ones, and wil not you? Doth God own them in Ordinances, Formes, &c. and wil not you? Truly I must tell you, it flowes from the flesh, and not from the spirit; take heed of being exalted above measure; I know you have experience that there is a fleshly exalting principle in you, and its the work of the Spirit to destroy that flesh; I speak to you, who are indeed Saints in and under a more Spirituall dispensation; not to those who talke of it without power, who scoffe at Saints actings, &c. by which it appeares they are indeed men in the flesh, though judging themselves men in the Spirit: and thus are many of you as deeply under the power of a censuring Spirit. as any who live under Formes and lower dispensations, where that principle of Truth is truly seated, as every one hath received, so let him walke by the same rule, it will put an end to those censurings and divisions about

the things of God; it will teach you to bear with, and forbear one another in Love. In a word, it will make you able to see and say, that your owne condition not long since was the same; and truly the Spiritual Christian can say, and that by experience, that it is the *Saints* portion to passe through various dispensations, untill they come to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the *Sons of God*.

And I cannot passe without a word in this place to you, who are *Members of the high Court of Parliament*; I meane such amongst you who are *Members of Jesus Christ*, my word is directed unto none else: Its true, God hath called you to *Honour*, yet your Honour is but to serve the Kingdome; and this is Honour enough, and it will be your utmost end, who are principled with Honour from above.

First, You know right well, that there is much adoe about Religion, much division and dissention betweene particular parties and factions: I must tell you, God hath put a power into your hands, if you have but hearts to make use of it; by which you may if not reconcile, yet compose things into such a way, as that all may have a being each

each with other, and truly if your souls be but truly acquainted with the great God, how that,

1. He hath given the truth to be the habitation and being of al his creatures, *He causeth the Sun to shine on the just and unjust.*

2. That hee is the fountaine and fulnesse of the Saints excellency, how ever he suffers them to run from mountain to hil, how ever he suffers those fleshly divisions amongst them, yet in conclusion wil hee put an end unto them.

3. That hee hath reserved dominion and power over the consciences of men to himselfe, and wil not give his glory to any other, that who so usurps it, puts himselfe in the room of God, and saith, that he is God; being traitors to the King of Glorie.

4. That it is his worke to teach men to worship him, for hee owns no worshippers, but those who worship in Spirit and truth; and therefore that those who prescribe forms of worship to others, unworthily put themselves in the roome of the Spirit; and that to set up uniformity in formes, is no lesse then the setting up of a carnal, formal, and fleshly Religion, encouraging in that way of formality a fleshly,

ly, formal generation of people. But I trust, *Right Honourable*, honored with that noble Birth from above, by which you have seen the Kingdome of Heaven, and are able to say by experience, That it is a Kingdom not of this world, That it consists not in meate and drinke, not in observations, as Touch not, Taste not, Handle not; not in forms and fleshly uniformity, in external prescriptions by men, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit: Spirituall uniformity, or a unity in that one Spirit; they who are joynd to the Lord are one Spirit; you see, or shal see that it belongs not to man to punish Heresie, Blaiphemy, Atheisme, Non-conformists &c. nay you see, or shal see, that those who set out most against Heresie, Blasphemy, &c. call for your assistance to punish with death, are indeed the greatest Heretikes, Blasphemers and enemies to Jesus Christ, and to your and the Kingdomes peace; but its your worke as farre as in you lieth, to stop the rage and fury of men, and by Law to compel them to live peaceably with each other, and with David, To deliver the Lambs out of the Lions mouths, and your selves to be paternes of Purity, Piety, Meeknesse, and Love, that so you might manifest yourselves to be the Sons of God, in the midst of this  
perverse

perverse and crooked Nation; and wherein you have been failing in this particular under what notion or consideration soever, whether from your zeal, or Covenant, or the like, the Lord make you truly sensible of your ignorance and folly therein; that so you may become a blessing to the Nation, and a protection to al, especially those who call on the name of *Jesus*, of what opinion soever, who remaine faithfull unto the State; and as your knowledge of God in the *Mystery*, and your being made one with him in the Spirit, will thus make you nursing Fathers to all the Saints without respect: so likewise will it fill you with the dispensation of righteousness, justice and equity to your brethren; it will not onely carry you on in the executing of Justice upon transgressours without respect, but in delivering this Nation from oppression and oppressours, though it hath a long time groaned under both; let the people know that your intentions are to doe them right, to set them free, &c. looke not so much at former establishments; things formerly might not appear to be burdens, that now appeare to be heavy and grievous oppressions; hearken therefore unto the cry and petitions of the people, who out of sense and experi-



experience, apply themselves unto you, will be not only your policy, but your piety to doe them right; and I must tell you, that if you are posselt with a principle from above, you will be as ready to answer, as the people will be to ask, such things wherein true equity and liberty consists, and this is that which God will effect in these later daies; and if the Kingdom of God be set up within you, you wil rejoyce to see a Kingdome of Righteousnesse without you; and that this may be effected, you wil not only be forward and free in the execution of Justice upon offenders, at distance from you, but you will be zealous in the Light and power of that Law in the Spirit, to see Justice executed upon all evil things within you, and evil persons among you, who seeke to pervert the right waies of God, who in stead of bringing forth righteousness to others, seeke to exalt themselves in others ruine, and to involve the Nation under a farther oppression and tyranny: Thus you acting righteousness and truth, the righteous God wil be with you, and protect you, *For the righteous God loveth righteousness*; and this wil be assuredly establishe in this and other Nations, in his owne time.

I must likewise speake a word to you Officers and Souldiers in the Army, from the highest to the lowest, who know the Lord, or rather are known of him; if you are truly acquainted with and live under the power of this Law in the Spirit, your worke will be to preserve peace and unity, not onely amongst Saints, but amongst al, and as God hath done much for you, and by you; so in the same power shall you do much for the good of the Nation: the eyes of the Nation are upon you, let yours bee upon them for good; let it appeare that you are not puffed up with, or in your fleshly exaltations; let not the prolonging of warre, but the setting of peace be your endeavour; look not so much at setting your selves in perpetual Authority, as in letting the Kingdome in her long expected liberty and peace; let not Saints be grieved in the beholding of your fleshly and selfe-exalting carriages, in these fleshly preferments and exaltations in the world, let your end be the effecting of Gods end, which is *liberty and peace* unto the Nation: so shal you with the rest be *blessed in your deed.*

Thus have I with much tenderesse, and love, applied a word, I trust in season, to you al, who have but tasted how gracious the

the Lord is, under what dispensation  
you are, the Lord speaking life and power  
in you; it may exceedingly tend to the  
healing of your selves and the Nation in peace,  
and the healing of those wounds and bre-  
ches amongst us, &c.

## CHAP. XVIII.

### *Of the Spirituall SABBATH.*

**T**Here remaineth yet a Sabbath to the peo-  
ple of God, but this Sabbath is *Spirituall*,  
known and enjoyed only by those who live  
in and after the *Spirit*. A Sabbath signifieth a  
rest, and believers in *Christ* enter into this rest:  
the rest of the *Jewish Sabbath*, and of al the  
*Jewish Sabbaths* of the Land of *Canaan*, &c. was  
typicall; and presented us with the *spirituall rest*  
of the Gospel: therefore the Apostle, *Heb. 4.*  
after he had mentioned both the rest of the  
Sabbath, and of the Land of *Canaan*, he con-  
cludes, *That there yet remains a rest to the people*  
*of God, v. 9. & v. 3. We that have believed doe enter*  
*into this rest.*

As God finished his worke in fixe daies,  
and rested the seventh, and so ceased from his  
work, to wit, of Creation: so when a soule  
comes to believe, he enters into *spirituall rest*,

and so keepeth Sabbath with the Lord, resting from his owne worke. And this is the Christians Sabbath and holy day, a day of delight and Spirituall solace to the Soule who lives in it; a day of Spirituall liberty, and not of bondage; a day in which the Soule enjoys all good in the Fountain; this is that Land of rest, even the Land of Canaan, that promised good Land, flowing with Milk and Honey, a Land of Oile, Olives & Butter.

O, this glorious, spirituall Land, were it more knowne, it would be more sought after; this is the substance of all those types in the Old Testament; this is Israels Land in the Spirit; this is that Land God hath promised to gather his people into, in these latter daies, and David their King shall reigne over them, and be their Prince for ever.

My deare brethren, did your souls but see into the glorious rest of this Spirituall Sabbath, into the riches of this glorious Land, the abundance of all Spirituall delights, and soul-satisfying excellencies, the high honor of the Inhabitants of this Kingdome; all Kings and Priests in the Spirit to the Lord, and shall reigne for ever.

O, you could not be so taken up in, and possess with the glories of any externall excellency, or thing without you, it would make

make you trample under feet all fleshly honours and dignities, all resting in any thing short of this rest: In a word, it would make you slight the delights and glories of any Kingdome, of any Canaan, short of Spirituall Canaan, this Land of spiritual rest, and soul-satisfying delight; if you saw *Jesus Christ* to be the substance, the body of those shadows, from your being gathered up into, and so living in this substance, this body, it would soon end all controversies in your Spirits about things below and short of this rest.

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## CHAP. XIX.

### Of the SPIRITUAL BAPTISME.

**T**HERE is a Baptisme of the Spirit that Saints are to be baptized with, called by *John*, a Baptisme of the Spirit, and of Fire: Its true, we reade of the Baptisme of water, this was *Johns* Baptisme, of which *John* himselfe saith, He must encrease, viz. *Christ*, but I must decrease, that is, *Johns* Ministration; there is likewise a Baptisme of afflictions and sufferings in the flesh, and this *Christ* suffered; and this the rest of his body must suffer: but there is a Baptisme of the Spirit, and its called, *Christs* Baptisme, for these reasons.

First, Because persons being made partakers of this Baptisma, have the Spirit, are made partakers of the Spirit of Christ, Christ is in them, that is, the Spirit of Christ, the Anointing is in them; and thus being baptized into Christ: they are.

Secondly, Baptized into his death, and so suffer with him the losse of all fleshly excellency, and fleshly glory; therefore its called, a Baptisme of the Spirit and of Fire. Beloved, *Iesus Christ* is a Fire where he comes, burning up all the drossy part of man; he comes as a Refiners Fire, and Fullers Sope; he will throughly purge and refine the Soule where he comes; and the Soule being thus baptized into his death, and all flesh being buried with him in Baptisme, its likewise baptized into his Resurrection and Life; that as it hath beene like him in his death, so it may also be like him in his Resurrection, and so are believers made partakers of a Spirituall Resurrection with *Iesus Christ*; this is a Resurrection from Spirituall death to Spirituall Life; a Resurrection out of flesh into Spirit, out of earth into Heaven, this Resurrection shall be completed at the last day, when there shall be a perfect abolishing of all flesh, and so an eternall Resurrection in the Spirit, and an everlasting



everlasting deliverance into the perfect and compleat, glorious liberty of the Sonnes of God; and being thus baptized with this Spiritual Baptisme into Christ, they are baptized into his Light, Life, Liberty, Power, Wisdom, and Glory eternally.

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## CHAP. XX.

### Of the Spirituall SUPPER.

**T**HERE is a Spirituall Supper, as well as a Spirituall Baptisme, a Spirituall feeding upon Jesus Christ, and that as he lives in us: Hence it is that Christ saith, *My Body is Meat indeed, and my Bloud is drinke indeed; he that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Bloud, dwelleth in me, and I in him;* now the Flesh and Bloud of Christ may be said to be meate and drinke Indeed: Either,

First, in relation to his humane nature, as he was a man dying for sinners; and so man receiving Justification from sinne by the first act of Faith, and so peace with God, Rom. 5. 1. Man thus makes a sweet and satisfying Supper on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, glorying in this reconciliation and peace with God: But,

Secondly, he is the Christian Supper, as

he lives in them in the Spirit; for so he dwells in them; and this is that Christ principally intends in those words; for he explaines himselfe, *Joh. 6. 63. It is the Spirit that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speake are Spirit and life.* And indeed not onely in this, but in the rest of *Scripture*, there is Spirit and Life discovered, if the Lord helpe you to see it; now it is this Spirit and life that quickneth, and it is this Spirit and Life, which is the *Spiritual Soules Supper*; and indeed no Supper short of this can satisfie the *Spiritual Christian*: this is that feast of *Fat things* promised, *Isa. 25. 6. And made in the Lords Mountaine, even a Feast of Fat things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined.*

O, that rich, glorious, and soul-satisfying Feast! that those who are thus translated into the *Kingdome of his deare Son*; that are thus called up into this *Mountain*, made in the Spirit with him: here the Soul may eat and drinke, yea, drinke abundantly, full and deep draughts of *Spiritual satisfaction* and consolation, where it shall for ever be satisfied, and satiate with the goodnesse of the *Eord*: And truly friends, its this hidden *Manna* that everlastingly satisfieth; it is this *Bread and water of Life*, of which when you have

have eaten and drunke, you shall never hunger or thirst againe, but it will be in you a well of water, springing up to everlasting life. In a word, its this Spirituall Supper that will everlastingly satishie your Souls; he that is fetcht up into this Mountaine, shall dwel on high; bread shall be given him; his water shall be sure; when others are hungry, he shall eate; when others are thirsty, he shall drinke; when others are spiritually pained, and by reason thereof shall cry and howle for sorrow of heart; He shall sing forth Spirituall Songs of praise for joy, for he shall live in the fulnesse of joy, and pleasure for ever.

## CHAP. XXI.

### Of the second Coming of CHRIST.

AND concerning the Second Coming of Christ, it is likewise fulfilled in the Spirit; he went away in the flesh, that so he might come in the Spirit: Not that I in this place question his coming to put a finall end to all things: but this to me is without question, that as there was a coming of Christ in the flesh, so there is a coming likewise in the Spirit, and that in the discovery of himselfe in the Spirits of his people: he was no sooner gone in the flesh,

but he comes in the Spirit; God makes a glorious appearance in his flesh; and not only in his Flesh that was, but as it were, the *First Fruits*; but he in like manner appears in the Flesh of al the Saints, for Christ and al Saints make but one Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 12. And this is the *Mysterie* of God to appeare in the flesh of his Sonne, that is, in all the Saints, they are al his Sonne, his Anointed, and this glory is manifest in them at the Glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour *Jesus Christ*. Hence it is, that when Christ speakes of his second coming in Glory, *Math. 24. 34. Verily I say unto you, that this Generation shall not passe, till all these things be fulfilled*: He did not speake of things far away, but the glorious appearing of himselfe in the Spirit: behold here is wisdom, Christ coming to judge all Jewish formes and formalities, and to passe a sentence of death upon them all. Christ comes gloriously in the Gospell, with the sound of the Spiritual Trumpet, gathering many Soules from one end of the Heavens to the other: Now *Jerusalem* must fall, not onely Temporally but Spiritually; and all this was accomplished in that Generation: so likewise the words of Christ, *Math. 16. 28. Verily I say unto you, there be some of you who stand here,*

here, that shall not taste of death, till they see the  
Sonne of man coming in his Kingdom: and they saw  
him coming in his Kingdome, in the Clouds of  
Heaven, in power and great glory, darkning the  
most glorious dispensations in the World,  
and slaying al flesh before him: And if the  
appearance of Christ in the Clouds was so  
glorious, that is, in Ordinances and dis-  
pensations, undermining al the glory be-  
fore it; what wil his bright appearance  
effect, when he shal appeare as the Sunne for  
brightnesse, transforming Soules into his  
owne glory? Its true, the same Truth is  
now manifest, and he appears in the Clouds  
of Heaven darkly in the same dispensations;  
and yet he appeares with power and great  
glory, not onely to many Soules in and un-  
der those dispensations, but likewise to the  
overturning of all Jewish or Antichristian  
Ordinances, or inventions of men; and its  
that Saints may comfortably and confi-  
dently looke for his more glorious appear-  
ance in them; *When the light of the Moone  
shall be as the light of the Sunne, and the light  
of the Sunne seven fold; this is that Saints  
enlightned in this Truth, as earnestly ex-  
pected in the Primitive times, as the Jewes  
before did his coming in the flesh. Tim.*  
*2. 13. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glo-*

## A General Epistle

your appearing of the Great God, 2 Pet. 3. 12. Looking for, and hastning unto the day of God, &c. And as Christ went away in the flesh, and came againe in the Spirit, and his Second appearance was with so much power, and Glory, consolation, and satisfaction to the Saints, as he saith himselfe, Job. 16. 20. *Verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, and the world shall rejoyce, but, vers. 22. I will see you againe in the Spirit, and your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy shall no man take from you.*

So likewise since he hath been a long time gone away in the Spirit, and we have had for the most part but a fleshly sight, and fleshly apprehensions of him: but he will yet once more appeare, not only in the clouds of Heaven, but with much brightnesse and Glory in the Spirits of his people; wherein the earth must be consumed, and the Heavens melt with fervent heat; Oh therefore looke for him, and behold the Lord whom ye seeke shall suddenly come into his people, even as the light shines out of the East into the West, for to them who looke for him, shall he appeare the Second time, without sinne to Salvation, Hebr. 9. 28. Oh the Glorious workes that he will effect in this his second comming in his Kingdome, when he shall appeare, we shall likewise appeare



peare with him in Glory; that this may be effected: Even so come Lord Iesus, come quickly, and let all the Saints say, Amen.

## CHAP. XXII

Wherein some grounds tending to UNPLIN are laid downe.

**FIRST,** A sensibleneffe of your owne comming short in the perfection of knowledge; if you see that it's possible for you to erre, and that there is yet much ignorance in the mysterie remaines in you.

How can you be bitter and rigid unto those who differ from you? Nay I must tell you, that all bitterness flowes from the flesh, and argues much ignorance to bee in that soul in whom it is; that much ignorance yet remaines, I shall manifest thus:

Those many different apprehensions about the things of God, argues much ignorance in those things.

Truly my brethren, were you but truly sensible of your owne weakenesse, and ignorance, you will be very ready to beare with the like in others; considering likewise that he who differs from you, may be in the Truth, and you in the error; that its possible

## A General Epistle

ble for thee to call *evill good, and good evill* : he that knowes not al Truth may be opposite to Truth in another ; and if thou seeſt that opinion held by thy brother, of which thou haſt experience within thee, that it is an error ; why it may be not long ſince thou waſt in the ſame, or mayſt at preſent be in the like, though not the ſame ; *Be not big minded, but feare.*

Secondly, Conſider the neare relation of Chriſtians, one in that one Eternal Spirit, Brethren, al Children of one Father, one Houſhold, one Family ; And O, *how pleaſant is it for brethren to dwell together in unity!* O, how uncomely it is, to ſee diviſions and jar-rings amongſt brethren ! If there be any tenderneſſe of Love, any bowels of compaſſion, thinke of theſe things.

Thirdly, God is one with and in al Saints, however they are under ſeveral and various diſpenſations, yet the thoughts of God are tender to them ; and ſhal thou or I be rigid where the Father manifeſts love? Wilt thou be out where the Father is in? Wilt thou be at enmity where the Father is at Unity? If the love of God rule in thee, thou canſt not.

Fourthly, Variance and bitterneſſe flows from beneath, its of the fleſh, and its earthly,

ly, sensual and devilish : But wisdom  
from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy  
to be entreated, &c. And love will beare all  
things, believe all things, endure all things, it will  
not be barsh, it thinketh, much lesse speaketh, no  
evill : O, this excellent principle of Love,  
flowing from the Spirit of Love, would  
quickly put an end to those divisions and  
differences amongst you.

Fifthly, God hath not made thee judge of,  
and Law-giver to thy brother, he hath re-  
served that to himselfe ; he is to walke in  
that he apprehends to be Truth in himselfe,  
and not in thee, For to his owne Master he  
standeth or falleth; he hath not given any man  
power to be a Law to his brother; O, there-  
fore give the same liberty to thy brother,  
thou expectest thy selfe; And as thou wouldst  
be should doe to thee, so doe to him ; In so doing  
shal Peace and Unity be abundantly pre-  
served.

Sixthly, and Finally, Its this Unity in  
Spirit, though differing in Formes, that  
must put an end to wars and confusions in  
the Nation, if ever it be ended.

We talke of settling the Kingdome in  
peace ; But I am much mistaken, if ever it  
be accomplished, unlesse the Lord teach us  
to beare with, and forbear one another;

When once the Mountaine of the Lords House is established upon the top of all Mountaines; then shall Swords and Speares and all be broken, and men shall not learne warre any more.

Oh therefore my beloved, if you love the Peace of the Nation, study Unity, though differing in Formes; the want of this is the ground of War and blood; and indeed it is a bloody principle that dwells in flesh, the exaltation of its own fleshly Formes, although in blood.

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### CHAP. XXIII.

*Some Doubts and Queries answered, concerning what hath been formerly spoken.*

**Question,** **I**s it not the Magistrates Duty to settle Religion, that all might worship God in one Way?

**Ans.** First, none can settle Religion truly, but he who makes men Religious: Its true, Magistrates may settle men in Formes, and so make men Hypocrites, but none can bring to the true worship of God, but himselfe.

Secondly, *Iesus Christ* hath reserved that to himselfe; Its his Honor and his Glory, he will not give it to an other; and those who thinke to take it from him are enemies unto him; for he is very Jealous of his Glory and tender of his Saints.

**Question,**

**Question.** How shall they dispenſe with their Covenant; wherein they have ſolemnly promiſed in the preſence of the moſt high God, In liſting up their hands to Heaven, no ſettle Religion in the three Kingdomes, according to the Word of God.

**Anſ.** Firſt, If they have Covenanted to do that which God never called them unto, nay, that which tends directly to the dethroning of Jeſus Chriſt: ſuch a Covenant is better broken then kept: its a ſinne to make it, but its a greater ſinne to performe it; ignorance in making, but Rebellion in obſerving.

But ſecondly, That Covenant bindes them to Reform Religion no otherwiſe but according to the word of God; now if that be kept cloſe unto, I am ſure the Word of God gives them no Word or Warrant to ſuch a Reformation; Therefore if they act according to the Word of God, they are in the power of God Reforme themſelves, and uſe all Lawfull meanes for the Reforming of others, which will be in theſe two.

First, In making whoſome Lawes for the reſtraining of ſinne.

Secondly, By encouraging the preaching of the Goſpel; by which meanes God working, Soules may be reformed.

**Queſty.** Doe not univerſall Toleration tend to incenſedneſſe and fleſhly liberty?

**Anſ.**

First, for carnal men as good  
be licentious and carnal without, as under  
a Forme. Its not restraint or compulsion  
into a Forme that makes a man religious,  
but rather an hypocrite; as good a man per-  
ished in a way of prophaneesse, as in the  
way of hypocrisie and formality.

Secondly, The Law might prevent grosse  
abominations, out-rages and wickednesses  
in such men.

Thirdly, Saints are kept from loosenesse  
by another Law then that without them,  
even the Law in the Spirit; they cannot sin,  
because grace abounds; the Law of the Spirit  
of life makes them free from the Law of sin  
and death.

*Object.* But men will then be of any Religion,  
and there will be variety of Religion amongst us?

*Ans.* Its meet it should be so, that every  
one should walke according to what he is  
perswaded; for every man is to be fully per-  
swaded in his owne minde of what he pro-  
fesseth, and God hath not given power to  
any man to usurpe authority over the con-  
science of another in this case: and if a man  
perish in an erroneous opinion and pra-  
ctice, its no more then if he had perished in  
any other way, as an hypocrite, being com-  
pelled therunto: And its the work of God  
to





ry is well as in these things, not living so  
union to the fountain as in the stream but  
when once the soul comes to know God in,  
and to live after the Spirit, then it is carried  
on under the Law in the Spirit, and so wor-  
ships God in Spirit.

*Quest. What is preaching?*

*Ans.* A declaring forth of the Grace and  
love of the Father, according to the Soules  
apprehension and enjoyment, in the light  
and power of the Spirit, its not to forme  
up things from the Letter, this a naturall  
man may do: and many doth: but to bring  
forth of the treasury within, thing new and  
old, this is to preach the Gospel, to declare  
God in Christ, for to be all in the spiritu-  
al Christian; its true, wee have gotten a  
customary formal way of preaching, to take  
a Text and opinion, and so to speak, not but  
that its my liberty to stoop to the weakness  
of men in this particular, but I must tell  
you, that preaching for this part to be-  
come a matter of art, not of the Spirit, is  
but amongst Christians to out to speak of  
truth from the enjoyment of truth is to speak  
of it from the inward excellency glory.

*Ques. What is the end of Preaching?*

*Ans.* The end of preaching, and of other Or-  
dinances, is for the bringing up of soules into  
a more perfect liberty and glory.

*to all the Saints*

the spiritual enjoyment of God, into the Unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man in Christ; and truly none can thus preach, but those who are in some measure made acquainted with, and so live in this perfection: what may you then think of those who are not truly ignorant of, but preach and press against this truth, yet account themselves the Ministers of Jesus Christ?

Beloved, God never gave any external dispensation unto you, to that end you might live forever in it: but that you might be brought up by it, through and above all, to himself, that so you might live in him who is the fountain without those streams: and truly it is that I look for to be effected in the Saints, not to depend upon any Ordinance, as preaching, &c. but from an enjoyment of God to teach one another in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs, making sweet melody in their hearts unto the Lord; that is, being filled with the glorious enjoyment of God in their spirits, they now can do nothing more but tell of his goodness, and joyce in him. On that Saints knew more what it is, thus to teach each other, and thus to make melody in their hearts.

Quest, But how may I know that I have the

Spirit of God, there being so many delusions in the world: May not I thinke that I am led by the Spirit of God; when it is the Spirit of the devil, seeing Satan can transforme himselfe into an Angel of light.

Ans. 1. The glorious appearance and manifestation of God in man, laies low the flesh, that which tends to the abasing of the creature, and to the exaltation of God, that laith the creature low, and setteth up God high, is of God; for flesh never abaseth it self: but its the work of the Spirit to lay low the flesh; and its this glorious appearance of God, In pulling down all high and fleshly exaltations in the flesh will be the exaltation of God, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, &c.

But secondly, Although its true, there is yet to be much spirituall delusion, yet the Spirit of God is no deluding Spirit, But its the Spirit of Truth and light: so that where it is gloriously working, it discovers it selfe; there is no seeing of the Spirit, but in its owne light: In this light shall wee see light; it is a light that expels darknes and ignorance, throweth down the flesh, transforms the soul into its owne nature, fills it with humility, love, patience, and a universal conformity to Jesus Christ both within and without; and therefore

Therefore those who talk of the Spirit, and yet are ignorant, proud, carnal, prophane, earthly, &c. much deceive themselves; its a *privilege* from beneath, and not from above: for if the soule bee experimentally posselt with God, he is made conformable to him; but if with the Spirit of darkness, its made more and more conformable unto it, &c.

Thus, my dearly beloved, have I made so bold to speake a word, and I trust in season, to all sorts of Saints, under what dispensation soever, and that from much tenderness of love, and bowels of pity and compassion unto you, that if possible you might be pulled out of that *fire of division* that is amongst us: I have sent abroad and freely distributed this small, and I think my last *Mite* into the common Treasury, not only for information in the mystery of truth, but for the uniting of Saints together in that one mystery; and if it by providence come into the hands of any Christian, though not under those dispensations mentioned, yet to them its directed as well as others, for my desire in it is the generall good, and if thou findest any thing in it, either contrary to, or above thy apprehension, be not harsh to censure, but wait: Be not high minded, but fear: Be not bitter, but of a patient spirit: As every one hath received

*A General Epistle, &c.*  
... by the same rule: and if any be  
contrary minded, God will reveal it in his  
time. Thus at present, my friends, farewell.  
The essence of Grace, Peace, Love, and the Spirit  
of Meekness, Patience and Forbearance be  
multiplied upon you, and manifested in  
you more and more, until you  
come to be complicated in  
him, who filleth All  
in All.

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**FINIS.**

